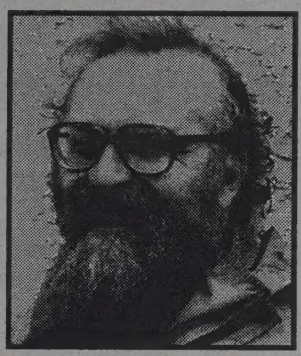
Do We Need Protection From Gay Marriage?

You have to wonder why our legislature toils so arduously to protect us from the threat of gay marriage — which is already illegal in Colorado. However, a pending court case in Hawaii could legalize such marriages there. Our federal constitution provides that "Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each State to the public Acts, Records, and judicial Proceedings of every other State."

This means that marriages which aren't legal in Colorado, but are recognized in other states, are valid in Colorado.



For example, Coloradans must be at least 18 years old to marry without parental consent. But a 17-year-old Mississippi boy can marry a 15-year-old Mississippi girl without anybody's permission, and they could then move to Colorado and live legally as husband and wife — even though their wedding license could not have been issued here.

Similarly, Colorado finds marriages between first cousins to be morally repugnant and does not allow such unions. But New Mexico does, and those couples have moved to Colorado without getting arrested for illicit cohabitation.

... Why do we need protection from homosexual marriages, when the legislature doesn't think we need protection from rapacious corporations, water-greedy Front Range cities and sprawl-minded real-estate developers?

And if the Traditional Values Crowd find that an abomination, where were they when televangelist and candidate Marion "Pat" Robertson last visited Colorado? His Virginia parents were first cousins, and if there were any purist pickets concerned about Robertson's close-knit family tree, I missed them.

The point: Even if we Coloradans don't really approve of some marriages that other states sanction, we put up with them. We'd probably figure out how to cope with the dread specter of Gay Marriages From Hawaii, too, but our legislature thinks we need protection.

At this moment, the Union Pacific Railroad plans to merge with the Southern Pacific and to rip out the railroad tracks west of Pueblo. The end of rail service in the mountains means the end of mining jobs that pay good wages, and it pretty well insures a burger-flipping Third-World tourist economy in central Colorado.

Somehow our legislature doesn't find any need to address that problem, even though the state constitution explicitly forbids such rail mergers and they all swore an oath to uphold that very constitution.

Look at other issues that affect your real life — job security, health care, land use, water allocation, air quality, highways, gunplay and you'll see that if the general assembly isn't ignoring the problem, then it's usually making matters worse. But our legislators are busy protecting us from the Threat of Gay Marriage.

Thomas Jefferson once observed, "It does me no injury for my neighbor to say that there are twenty gods, nor no god. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg."

That seems like the appropriate attitude about gay marriages, too. It neither picks my pocket nor breaks my leg if the two guys who own the house down the street fly to Hawaii and get legally married and Colorado has to recognize their union, just as Colorado recognizes Mississippi marriages between teenagers and New Mexico weddings between first cousins.

So why do we need protection from homosexual marriages, when the legislature doesn't think we need protection from rapacious corporations, water-greedy Front Range cities and sprawl-minded real-estate developers?

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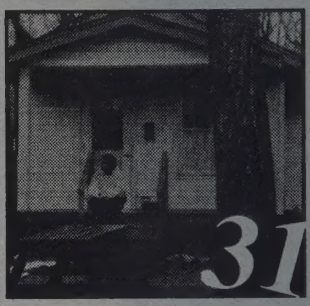

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On the Cover
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